



Navajo Nation Council – Office of the Speaker

Contact: Jerome Clark, Communications Director

Phone: (928) 871-7160

Cell: (928) 637-5603

Fax: (928) 871-7255

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nnlb.communications@gmail.com

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Council Delegate Jonathan Nez gives testimony at Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission

Tempe, Ariz. – On October 3, 2011, Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) gave a testimony before the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission (AIRC) in support of a proposed draft congressional map.

"We come before you today as a delegation from the Navajo Nation in support of the current proposed map," Nez opened to the commission. "The proposed congressional map is equitable and wanted to state that position for the record."

In early August, the Naa'bik'iyáti' Committee passed a resolution that allowed the Navajo Nation Speaker Johnny Naize to assign delegates to work on redistricting in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Nez was selected to serve on the Naa'bik'iyáti' Redistricting Subcommittee for both Arizona and Utah. Other members who have diligently contributed to the Navajo Nation's position on redistricting include Council Delegates Alton Joe Shepherd, LoRenzo Bates, Leonard Tsosie, and Kenneth Maryboy.

Nez stated that the proposed congressional mapping was further supported because it would allow the Navajo Nation to work with Southern Arizona governments to address issues of drug trafficking.

District 1, on the adopted congressional map, covers known illegal drug trafficking routes that extends from Southern Arizona to Northern Arizona; if District 1 remains as it is on the adopted map, it may create funding opportunities for communities impacted by trafficking routes.

"A lot of our proposed recommendations are included in the current map," Nez stated. "As always, the Navajo Nation is at the forefront with other Native American communities in helping out with the congressional redistricting process."

The draft congressional-district map was adopted by a vote of 3-1, with one abstention.

The adoption of the congressional-district map now leads to a thirty (30) day comment period; during which the AIRC will host hearings throughout the state and are expected to occur in the middle of October. The next AIRC hearing is scheduled for October 14, 2011 in Window Rock, Arizona.

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